

A Guide to
Starting a
Lincoln Library



from the Lincoln Collection of
IDA M. TARBELL

Ida Minerva Tarbell (1857-1944), author of a series of articles on Lincoln which doubled the circulation of *McClure's Magazine* in the 1890s, was both a Lincoln author and a collector. This book plate identifies items from her collection, now housed at Allegheny College.



A Guide to Starting a Lincoln Library

Hundreds of newcomers annually join the ranks of the Lincoln book collectors. Whether they own two books or two thousand books, each shares an interest in the life and times of the Martyred Sixteenth President.

For most persons, collecting Lincoln books becomes a hobby closely allied with their interest in Lincoln as a historical subject. But some are bibliophiles—they love books simply because they are books. Others buy books on speculation, hoping to realize a profit from investing in rare *Lincolniana*. Whatever one's reason for collecting Lincoln books, all agree that the number of books, pamphlets, and articles on the Lincoln theme is staggering.

As early as 1865, William V. Spencer published *Lincolniana*—the first bibliography of works on Lincoln. “Whatever relates to our Martyr-President,” wrote Spencer, “possesses undying interest.” Spencer’s list included 270 items, mostly





sermons and eulogies issued as pamphlets. In the following year, John Russell Bartlett listed approximately 300 sermons, orations, and poems on Lincoln in his *Catalogue of the Books and Pamphlets Relating to the Civil War in the United States*. A more comprehensive assemblage of works on Lincoln, including almost 900 items, appeared in 1870. This volume, *A Memorial Lincoln Bibliography*, by Andrew Boyd and Charles H. Hart, showed the number of copies of each item printed and, for sermons, the text selected by the clergyman.

In 1906 Judge Daniel Fish of Minneapolis published his monumental *Lincoln Bibliography*—comprised of 1,106 items. Fish helped bring order to the Lincoln field by carefully defining the term “Lincolniana” to include essentially only printed books and pamphlets relating distinctly to Lincoln. Fish also was the first Lincoln bibliographer to number the entries on his list, which immediately became the yardstick by which Lincoln book collectors measured their holdings. Despite the thoroughness of Fish’s bibliography, it was rendered out-of-date in 1925 by J. B. Oakleaf’s famous *Lincoln Bibliography*. So many new Lincoln titles surfaced after the Lincoln centennial in 1909, that Oakleaf was able to add 1,576 Lincoln entries to Fish’s once authoritative list. But Oakleaf’s listing, too, soon was surpassed.





In 1929 the Lincoln National Life Foundation (forerunner of the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum) began publishing a list of Lincolniana in *Lincoln Lore*. This provides students and collectors with up-to-date listings of Lincoln books. Taking advantage of the citations printed in *Lincoln Lore*—as well as the labors of previous Lincoln bibliographers—in 1945 Jay Monaghan published what today ranks as the foremost compilation of Lincolniana. In his *Lincoln Bibliography, 1839-1939*, Monaghan listed chronologically 3,958 Lincoln items. By consulting Monaghan for books and pamphlets published prior to 1940, and by using the *Lincoln Lore* bibliography for titles since 1939, the modern collector of Lincolniana can be assured of locating almost every printed work on the Sixteenth President.

The following list of 84 Lincoln titles is selective. From among the thousands of Lincoln works the staff of the Library and Museum have chosen those of special value to the broad range of Lincoln students. The volumes cited here have earned a reputation for accuracy, comprehensiveness, and overall balance. The list will serve as an able nucleus around which the new collector can begin to build a great collection. Whenever possible, editions still in print have been listed in favor of those no longer available.



LINCOLNIANA



DANIEL FISH COLLECTION

Pioneer Lincoln collector and bibliographer Daniel Fish used this bookplate to identify volumes in his famous library. The Fish collection later formed the nucleus of the 20,000-volume Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum.



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EX-LIBRIS



JOSEPH BENJAMIN
OAKLEAF

In 1925, the year of the publication of his *Lincoln Bibliography*, J. B. Oakleaf owned the largest private collection of Lincolniana extant. This bookplate identified volumes in his library. For many years the Lincoln field was dominated by five collectors: Oakleaf, Fish, and three others—Charles W. McLellan, Judd Stewart, and William H. Lambert. The “Big Five” popularized the collection of Lincolniana and systematized classification and cataloging procedures.

